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THE OBLIGATIONS OF THEOLOGY TO SCIENCE:

BY THE

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THE

DIVINE CALL TO THE MINISTRY:

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BEING THE FOURTH

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Obligations of Theology to Science:

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LECTURE.

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Obligations of Theology to Science.

Science and Revelation are complementary factors of Theology, as Theology and Psychology are of Religion. Neither can supersede the other, or by any assumption of self-sufficiency say, "I have no need of thee." No people unvisited by revelation have ever developed a pure Monotheism, much less a Deity whose attributes could challenge our respect or command our reverence. Nor, on the other hand, can it be denied that the highest and truest conceptions of Deity are possible only to those whose curriculum embraces the works of God as well as His word. From their relation to each other, the inference is irresistible that they were intended to supplement each other. Revelation speaks of a God authoritatively, and records numberless interviews with our race, and interferences on its behalf; and though all are highly anthromorphic in character, yet all visible

representations of Him were absolutely prohibited. This, to an age crude, and almost materialistic, must have been a serious deprivation. All undeveloped peoples have found relief in giving form to their gods; hence Dagon and Baal, Hercules, Jupiter and Brahma, all occupied their high places. If an Egyptian, a Chaldean, or a Roman, should it find it difficult to examine the work attributed to his deity, he had the gratification of looking upon his moulded or chiselled form. The stern prohibition of revelation was relieved by the assurance that the character of the Deity might be studied in His works, for "God, in the beginning, created the heavens and the earth," and to the hearing ear all nature whispered "*So vis monumentum circumspice.*" Thus the natural concomitant of revelation would be the study of nature. How early this began we cannot tell. Job tells us that in patriarchal times both Natural History and Astrology were cultivated. The Mosaic code makes scarce a reference to it. Four hundred years later, both David and his royal son seem to have been able to hear in the solemn silence of the heavens a declaration of the glory of God: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. No speech nor language, their voice is not heard." Yet, "their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

But we must leap about twenty-five hundred years, till, about four centuries ago, we touch a period which may properly be called the birthday of science.

Real science and correct scientific methods are little older than the fifteenth century. Whatever profitable work science has done for theology, has been done since then.

That science, or a knowledge of nature, should have its infancy and growth, and should in progress and development struggle toward maturity, was to be expected. Even, according to the Biblical record, nature herself groped her way from the formless void, the "empty and unfurnished," up to man. And geology assures us that in the unceasing succession of organic life that has tenanted this globe, no two ages have been exactly alike, either in fauna or flora. This progressive tendency is not peculiar to nature or science. It has been thus with revelation also. From the crudest materialistic object-lessons of revelation, to the sublimest utterances of the Great Teacher himself, thousands of years had elapsed before that humanity heard from His lips the real attitude towards us of "Him with whom we have to do." And so incrustated and obtuse was the human mind, that Pentecost and a supplemental revelation were necessary to prevent even His bosom companions from contracting the love of the Eternal to a horizon no wider than that scanned by the handful to whom had been committed the life-giving oracles.

It might not be amiss to notice the fact, in passing, that as in real science so here, it was phenomena that retired the narrow theory. God put no difference between the Gentile and the Jew, but purified both hearts by faith. The inevitable was accepted, the

field of view and of action was enlarged, and on true scientific principle.

"Strait is the gate and narrow the way that leads" to truth; and if either theological or scientific accuracy had been exacted from any age, who could have been saved? The veriest crudities, both in science and theology, have passed for truths. The creed of one age has been the ridicule of another, and to the mind of the worshipper God and His realm have changed as the various influences stamping the civilization of that age. But as the sacred Canon has been long closed, its utterances on Theology might be considered a fixed quantity, were it not for the fact that hermeneutics is being constantly and seriously affected by an enlarged acquaintance with nature. This is the factor which prevents stagnation. It is the disturbing element in our physico-theology. Nature continues to reveal her secrets, and these revelations modify our interpretation of the written word.

If we turn to the days in which the Biblical canon was closed, we are met by the crudest declarations touching nature. Nor are these crudities in matters of opinion only. They are equally glaring in statements of phenomena. Nor were those who had been favored with a revelation saved from the ludicrous humiliation.

Jew and Christian, philosopher and barbarian, fell into the grossest errors when they entered the realm sacred to science. Philo, a cotemporary of Paul, will furnish abundance of material illustrative of this, and he was a Jew thoroughly versed in the most advanced philosophy of his day. But if we turn to the epistle

of Barnabas, who was a companion of St. Paul, we will find references to natural history not a whit better than those furnished by Philo. "The weasel," we are informed, was justly hated "because that animal conceives with his mouth." The hyena must not be eaten, "because that creature every year changes its sex."

Clement, another cotemporary of the Apostle, says, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, ch. 12, "Let us consider that wonderful type of the resurrection, which is seen in the eastern countries, that is to say in Arabia. There is a certain bird called a phoenix, of this there is never but one at a time, and that lives five hundred years. And when the time of its dissolution draws near that it must die, it makes itself a nest of frankincense and myrrh, and other spices, into which when its time is fulfilled it enters and dies. But its flesh putrifying, breeds a certain worm, which being nourished with the juice of the dead bird brings forth feathers, and when it is grown to a perfect state it takes up the nest in which the bones of its parent lie, and carries it from Arabia into Egypt, to a city called Heliopolis; and flying in open day, in the sight of all men, lays it upon the altar of the sun, and so returns from whence it came. The priests then search into the records of the time, and find that it returned precisely at the end of five hundred years. And shall we then think it to be any very great and strange thing for the Lord of all to raise up those who religiously serve Him, when even by a bird he shows us the greatness of his power to fulfil his promise."

Many of the early Christian fathers abounded in stirring illustrations of spiritual things, drawn from the supposed operations of nature, often as fanciful and baseless as the story of the phoenix.

But these I emphasize, as these epistles were by many accepted as canonical, and as such form part of two of the most celebrated MSS. of our New Testament. The only Greek copy of the Epistle of Barnabas is found in the Codex Sinaiticus, and the only known copy of the Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians is that in the Codex Alexandrinus. It is of interest also to note, that in ancient times one of the most serious objections to the latter epistle was that it referred to worlds beyond the ocean. That was considered absurd enough to rob any book of canonicity.

Nor was this state of affairs peculiar to the first century. Before that time the darkness was denser ; after it, it was scarcely less oppressive. The numberless absurd references to natural objects found in the many Commentaries prior to the Reformation, show that the study of nature formed no part of the curriculum of a minister ; and to pass from the minuter portions of nature to the planetary or stellar system, we find matters, if possible, still worse. The intellect of the world was not by any means dead or even stagnant, but it found abundant scope for all its activities of fancy, logic, discovery, or invention, in the ecclesiastical and theological requirements of the day.

Examine the history of the Church through the

dark ages, and it will be found that speculative theology possessed and directed the human mind. Every idea was impressed with theology. Every idea that was started, whether philosophical, political, historical, or scientific, was considered from a religious point of view. The struggle between Nominalism and Realism was intensified exceedingly by the supposed relation of the question to the doctrine of the Trinity. And so powerful was the authority of the Church in all matters referred to the intellect, that even the mathematical and physical sciences were obliged to shape their decisions by its teachings. Then the theology of the day was exceedingly complex, and becoming increasingly so. It is evident that the right of freedom of thought was asserted, for heresies were numerous, and each demanded for its extinction the polemical skill of the defenders of the faith.

How could Theologians spare any time for science, while men could be found bold enough to deny that "if a mouse should happen to eat the Sacrament," he had eaten the body and blood of Christ! That question was debated very gravely both in councils, and, after the invention of printing, in books. Thomas Aquinas, (the Angelic Doctor); Alexander Hales, (the Irrefragable Doctor); John de Burgo, (Chancellor of the University of Cambridge); Gerson, (Chancellor of the University of Paris); Bonaventure, (the Seraphic Doctor); Peter Lombard, (Master of the Sentences); the Faculty of Paris, Antonius, Bishop of Florence, all in turn discussed the matter at length. The last mentioned delivered himself thus: "*Si mus aut aliud*

animal propter negligentem custodiam species sacramenti comederit," etc. "If a mouse or any other animal should happen to eat the Sacrament through negligence of keeping, let the keeper, through whose negligence it happened, be enjoined to penance forty days; and, if it be possible, let the mouse be taken and burnt, and let his ashes be buried in or about the altar." But Peter of Palus says: "The mouse's entrails must be drawn, and the portion of the sacrament that then remaineth, if the priest be squeamish to receive it, must reverently be laid up in the tabernacle until it be naturally consumed. But the host so found in the mouse's entrails may in nowise be thrown out into the pool, as a certain priest once used a fly that he found in his chalice after consecration. But if a man had such zeal that his stomach would receive it without horror, it should thus be disposed of." Nor did these gladiators shrink from the conclusion, "*Corpus Christi potest evomi.*"

But a better day was ere long to dawn. "Out of the eater was to come meat, and out of the strong sweetness." Some historians give to Bacon and Des Cartes the honor of having liberated the intellect of their day from the tyranny of theology. But we cannot admit this. The breach with Rome was long in culminating; and many a spirit, long before the days of Luthe., struggled to the death in asserting the right of human reason. Scotus, Abelard, Roscelin, and others—true sons of the Church—endeavored to the utmost to supersede authority by argument; and others, equally true to the Church, advocated and

practised the study of nature. Long before the publication of the "*Organon*," to which all the new impetus to the study of science is attributed, there were souls seeking communion with Nature, and trying to interpret her. The sphericity of the earth, its motion round the sun in an elliptical orbit, its attraction, had all been announced by Philotas, Rivalta, Calcagnini, and Copernicus, and Galileo had well earned the hostility of Rome years before the publication of the "*Organon*." The confirmation of Galileo's retracted theory was a terrible blow to the theory of infallible interpretation. The student of Nature forces the whole Church to attach a new meaning to a simple Scriptural statement. If this can occur once, where is it to end? Here is the assertion of a right to talk with Nature face to face, restrained by nothing but the laws that Nature herself imposes. Admitted to her temple, she has disclosed her secrets to her children. It is Nature's new evangel—her "peace on earth and good-will to men." We listen, and eclipses are no longer the forerunners of disasters, either national or individual. Comets have become harmless. All the terrors or charms of the number seven are broken for there are more than seven stars. The special interference of demigods, fiends, wizards, or witches, over the elements, the weather, plagues, earthquakes, the crops of the earth, or the products of the dairy, have all been gradually losing their hold, and are taking their place with the mythological exploits of the Pantheon. I say, gradually, for errors never die of suspicion, and they tyrannize over us long after we admit our inability to defend them.

In yonder byre the cows, while furnishing the usual quantum of milk, have, for many a day been profitless, as to butter. The milk seems as usual. The usual efforts are put forth to obtain butter; but, churn they never so long, nothing but a kind of froth is forthcoming. The cows are bewitched. Twelve miles away lives a man who can show in a mirror him or her whose evil eye has done the deed. The journey is made. Nothing is revealed by the mirror; but specific directions are given to have an ass's shoe made in one heat, and nailed to the bottom of the churn; to close all doors and windows; to build a large fire on the hearth—so that no entrance can be effected by the chimney; then to churn—when the owner of the evil eye will come to the window, crying for admittance. Actuated by a curiosity profound, if not over reverent, I found myself, somehow, an observer of the whole proceedings—saw the shoe nailed on the churn, and watched the windows closely. Result: no butter till the following year. I never heard a hint as to natural causes, although the man was an official member of a Church that prides itself on the intelligence of its membership, and thoroughly conversant with the Scriptures. I distinctly remember that no inquiry was made about the grasses or grain to which the cattle had access, but a very strong suspicion was attached to an old lady in the vicinity, who was credited with an unhealthy familiarity with the devil. The case I have mentioned need not be considered exceptional. To say nothing of heathen lands, every nation in Christendom has had its theology, warped and colored by

glaring absurdities. While we may not stop to explain why, it is undoubtedly a fact, that neither the Bible nor religion alone will remove them. In Scotland, the Bible is emphatically the book of the people. No land is better acquainted with its teachings. Yet every inch of its soil, its glens, and crags, its lakes, and heather, are traditionally supernatural. More ; these fairy fancies are by no means inoperative on the religious conceptions or movements of a people. It requires not the inspiration of John Barleycorn to make the average Scotchman ride hastily over some bridges, or past some bushes or cairns. The Christian Fathers, the Mediæval Church, the reformers, Luther and his coadjutors, worshipped a God whose realm was infested with innumerable imps, who toyed and sported with the forces of Nature. Nor did the Reformation purge the brood. They are found yet ; and, at times, in high places. If I mistake not, the shadows rested to some extent on the Epworth rectory ; and even the independent mind and broad scholarship of Adam Clarke proved scarcely a talisman against their influence. Like all natives of the Isle of Saints, I think he believed in ghosts.

We may pause here to say that a correct conception of God as the ruler of the world, or a rational cosmogony of the universe was utterly impossible until recent days. The opening chapters of Genesis must remain sealed till the student of Nature interprets them. And hermeneutics, in struggling with the Mosaic cosmogony, was worse than beating the air while ignoring the lamp of Science.

For this state of affairs—this ignorance of Nature—Christianity was in no way responsible. From the wealth of invective spent on Christianity, on account of this ignorance, we might well infer that the study of Nature had been forbidden in the Gospels, or that outside of the Church there was a light on these matters that she was endeavouring to eclipse. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The lamp of physical science was kindled only a few centuries ago, and correct methods of procedure began soon after. But all began *within* the Church; and men trained in the Church have given to the world nearly every discovery—certainly all the important discoveries—that have been made in Science. We admit with sorrow and shame that the efforts of some of these pioneers met with little encouragement. But the reason is easily found; and an impartial criticism cannot afford to charge Christianity with the follies of men who had so misinterpreted her spirit, and whose leadership the Church has long since abandoned. It should hardly be necessary to remind objectors that the men who extorted Galileo's retraction, and presented such a contemptuous front to Science, were the men whose wide departure from the spirit of Christianity necessitated the Reformation; and who treated the attempt to disseminate the Scriptures among the people with a contempt more deep, and a hostility more intense than they had ever offered to Science.

True, the Apostle bids the Corinthians "beware, lest any spoil them through philosophy;" but it was a philosophy coupled with "vain deceit after the tra-

dition of men," He also spake of "the opposition of science"—but it was "Science, falsely so called," against which he warned his friend Timothy. Undoubtedly "the wise men" of Greece and Rome were at a discount from his standpoint as a practical philanthropist. Had not the teachings of both the *Sophoi* and *philosophoi* abundant opportunity to flower and fruit in their disciples before the Nazarene appeared? Their σοφια του φυνσεως was but the vainest babblings, and their σοφια του θεου left them without any adequate conceptions of Him. True, they talked learnedly about culture, but the culture ended in a knowledge that "puffeth up," and the rank and file of humanity was unreached and unelevated. Christ and His illiterate disciples spake, and the common people heard them gladly. They took humanity as they found it; nor were they over scrupulous in their diagnosis of their patient. "Wilt thou be made whole?" was their simple and uniform question. 'Neither *sophoi* nor *philosophoi* would willingly place themselves among those needing the Physician; hence, "not many wise men were called." "But God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise," "that no flesh should glory in his presence."

What an illustration of this was furnished by the early history of Christianity! A carpenter and a few fishermen changed the religion of the Roman Empire, indeed, of the civilized world; hurled from their pedestals, never to be restored, every god and goddess in the Pantheon. The work was complete. But neither science nor philosophy could claim a share in

the regeneration. "It pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching," that is, by the preaching of Christ crucified, which the Greeks called foolishness, to turn the world upside down, to revolutionize both its philosophy and its theology.

It is not so strange that in the early Christian centuries the Church came to look upon all study, not strictly theological, with suspicion. This feeling grew till the reading of secular books (*gentilium librorum*) was prohibited even to the bishops, by the Fourth Council of Carthage, A.D. 398. The most prominent Christian Fathers, notably Jerome, condemns them unless when studied for theological ends. All physical science was contemptuously denounced as inconsistent with revealed truth; nor did that which was called science then deserve much better treatment.

But if science and philosophy proved powerless to elevate society in the first days of the Empire, they were equally barren of results in the centuries called the Dark Ages. Unfortunately a sterile philosophy took possession of the Church, robbing her of her pristine beauty and vigor, demanding her energies for philosophical poisoning and gyrating, or syllogistic somersaults. But, while fruitless as a Church, she furnished a rare soil for the propagation and nourishment of a thousand superstitions. The study of Nature was out of the question, for the tutelary saints of the numerous monasteries furnished miracles *ad libitum*, and for the most unseemly purposes. To have affirmed that God was a God of order, or that Nature was uniform in her operations, would have branded

you as a heretic which no water could cleanse. Some of the heaviest enterprises of those days were undertaken on the supposition that geographical and physical difficulties would be surmounted by supernatural aid. Witness the Crusades. Some of the judicial controversies of those days implied a Divine interference at the nod of every combatant. Witness the trial by combat, the handling red-hot iron, plunging the arm into a boiling fluid. But Nature, in swallowing the result, was having her revenge. Thousands sacrificed their lives in these trials, thousands upon thousands fell in the fanatical Crusades, and the famous Bull of Innocent VIII. against witchcraft, cost Europe more than a hundred thousand lives.

But these days have gone, never to return; and to science and scientific methods we owe the conception that everything, from the atom to the archangel, is subject to law; and that the God whom we worship is infinitely above caprice, as He is infinitely removed from partiality and duplicity. Science has enlarged God's domain, and brought order out of confusion; has magnified God, and elevated man. It has brought under our control elements that we formerly feared as supernatural, and enabled us to say, as no former age could, "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works; in wisdom hast Thou made them all."

It is usual to associate the birth of modern science with the rise of the inductive philosophy. I am disposed, however, to think that the break with Rome, which implied the snapping of authority, and the rejection of the Aristotelian philosophy, which had

been so long used by the dialectician solely for intellectual gymnastics, were rather the true cause of the turning toward Nature. A few years of even dim light and partial liberty sufficed to give to the world the correct theory of the heavens. These years, however, had Brahe, (1546-1601); Kepler, 1571-1630); Galileo, (1564-1642); and Bacon, (1546-1601), and the great Newton was born in the year that Galileo died, (1642-1727).

But nothing served so much to stimulate thought as the rise of Scientific Associations. These were founded in England, France, Italy, Florence, and Germany in the 17th century, and almost every nation of Europe possessed them in the 18th century. Yet from their imposing names we are not to imagine that all their discussions were on matters of pure science. At one of the meetings of the Royal Society of London, "Dr. Clark was instructed to lay before them Mr. Pellin's relation of the production of young vipers from the powder of the liver and lungs of vipers." "Sir Gilbert Talbot promised to bring in what he knew of sympathetical cures; those that had any powder of sympathy were desired to bring some of it to the next meeting." "The Duke of Buckingham promised to cause charcoal to be distilled by his chymist, and to bring into the Society a piece of unicorn's horn." "Sir Kenelm Digby related that the calcined powder of toads reverberated, applied in bagges upon the stomach of a pestiferate body, cured it by several applications."

"A circle was made with powder of unicorn's horn,

and a spider set in the middle of it, but it immediately ran out, severall times repeated. The spider once made some stay upon the powder." "A letter was introduced treating of a petrified city and its inhabitants."

"Sir Robert Moray, first President of the Royal Society, signalized the meeting at which he was elected by presenting a paper relating to *barnacles*, in which he affirmed that he had himself seen, in the Western Isles of Scotland, trees, to which were attached multitudes of shells, each containing a small but perfectly shaped sea-fowl, or solan-goose."

This is a curious list, but the museum formed soon after the great fire would furnish an equally rare one, for it contained, *inter alia*, "the stones taken out of Lord Balcarres's heart, a bottle full of stags' tears, a petrified fish, a petrified foetus." Nor had this museum much to boast over its rival at Lambeth, called *Museum Tradescantium*, for it contained "two feathers of the phoenix's tail, and a natural dragon."

Up to the middle of the 17th century, Natural History and Science in general were as wild and ludicrous as the "Arabian Nights." The elephant was then without joints, and to capture him you must fell the tree against which he rests his stiff limbs in sleep. The basilisk's breath or glance was deadly, and men were struck dumb at the sight of a wolf. The standard bill of fare of an ostrich of those days was a set of horseshoes. To find a stork, you must betake yourself to a Republic or a free State, so radical was its politics. For the phoenix and the dragon, we

refer you to royal museums. The griffin still abounded. The chameleon lived on air alone. The vegetable kingdom would enrich the collection, for among other items of science we are informed that the mandrake chooses its home under the gallows, and shrieks on being uprooted. Hence Shakespeare :

"And shrieks like mandrakes torn out of the earth
That living mortals hearing them run mad."

It formed part of Lord Bacon's celebrated prescription for a witch's ointment which contained "henbane, hemlock, mandrake, moonshade, tobacco, opium, and other soporiferous medicines." Regarding the origin of the organic world it is curious to observe that while we are asked by science to say either "*omne vivum ex ovo*," or "*omne vivum ex vivo*." Our ancestors submitted to no such restraints. Nature was more liberal in her favors—for our own Tyndale tells us that "the spontaneous generation of creatures quite as high as the frog was assumed for ages to be a fact. For nearly two thousand years after Aristotle, men found no difficulty in believing in spontaneous generation in cases of the most monstrous absurdity. Shellfish of all kinds were without parental origin. Eels were supposed to spring spontaneously from the fat ooze of the Nile. Caterpillars were the spontaneous production of the leaves on which they fed. While winged insects, rats, serpents, and mice were all thought capable of being generated spontaneously." When we remember that Nature's powers have become so toned, that nothing higher than mere bacteria,

vibriones, or monads are claimed as spontaneous products now by her most ardent admirers, we are forced to exclaim, "there were giants in those days." To those in the Church who accepted the theory, the bees in the carcass of Samson's lion, furnished satisfactory evidence.

Such was the science of those days, and in the most cultivated lands. These all confronted the Scientific Association of England and Europe, and many a strange subject occupied the attention of those pioneers whose sole object was the elimination of error and the establishment of truth.

It is of the utmost importance to remember that neither directly nor indirectly was the influence of the Royal Society of London, the first, and in many respects the noblest of them all, directed against the Church or religion. Although the Church did not at all times endorse or utilize their efforts, as true Christians, which the most and the ablest of them were, they labored on, satisfied that a more rational theology, and a purer religion would do justice to their memories. Nearly all of that bright galaxy of original explorers and experimenters of those centuries were firm believers in Christianity, and among the original members of the Royal Society might be found bishops and others of the Church whose names are as household words. I emphasize this because from the spirit of much of our modern science one would infer that all advancement had originated outside of the Church and against the spirit of Christianity. It is worthy of notice also, that while the voice of science modified the

interpretation put upon certain portions of Scripture, it to no appreciable extent lessened the reverence of these great explorers and discoverers for Christian truth.

This position is so strong that it is unnecessary to press it. Scarce a name can be mentioned, that is connected with any important discovery in science, that was not a sincere Christian. One is tempted, while standing within sight of Faraday Hall, to illustrate by that most distinguished scientist. Says Professor De la Rive of him, (in the *Bibliothèque Universelle*, 1867.) "Faraday, was in fact, thoroughly religious, and it would be a very imperfect sketch of his life which did not insist on this peculiar feature which characterized him. His Christian convictions occupied a great place in the whole of his being, and he showed their power and sincerity by the conformity of his life to his principles. He sought the evidences of his faith in the revealed truths at which he saw that the human mind could not arrive by itself alone, even though they are in such great harmony with that which is taught by the study of Nature. Faraday showed by his example that the best answer which a man of science can give to those who assert that the progress of science is incompatible with these convictions is to say to them, *and yet I am a Christian.*"

But while science was advanced by many who were theologians, its methods of procedure differ *toto coelo* from those of the theologian of that day, and for that

very reason it has rendered its greatest services to theology.

The theological method, as the scholastic, was essentially vicious. It inverted the true order of things. It supposed truth, and also its interpretation complete at first, and to every question, had one answer, *quid dixit?* What said some teacher? Then, how has the Church interpreted him? The last question was usually put first, "What has the Church by her councils declared?" When that was fully discovered, all caviling was at an end, and further questioning estopped. Reason was utterly out of place, and patistic literature was the *sine qua non* of hermeneutics. It is enough to make one shudder to think that our theology has come down to us through such hands, and to make us scrutinize narrowly our present inventory. The marks of those days, and of that vicious system are visible still, and many a day must elapse before Christendom is entirely freed from the tyranny of authority. True science calls no man master, and is always impatient of authority. It seeks phenomena, and asks for opportunities of examining them, and when hypothesis or theory is proposed it betakes itself with eager feet to verify it. It prefers facts to terms, reason to authority, Nature to the ancients, in a word, it experiments. To ask Christianity to submit to this course of procedure is to classify it with all true sciences.

To deny the jurisdiction of reason in testing Christianity and to follow the apologetic course that has characterized more than a millenium of its history

is to rob it of its chief glory, and make it the by-word of the skeptic. Not thus did Christ give it to the world, nor was it meant thus to be received by humanity. Not thus did it win its earliest victories, nor is it to-day making its grandest triumphs where the authority of its teachers is magnified and the evidence of its own power obscured. Remember that Christ asked no man to believe in Him till He had furnished ground for that belief. He condemned no man for ignoring His claims till He had forced them to exclaim, "When the Christ cometh will He do greater miracles than those which this man hath done?" or to affirm, "Never man spake as this man," and when He says, "If I had not come and spoken to them they had not had sin, but now they have no cloke for their sin," and again, "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin," He evidently meant to tell us that the human mind had rights which even He would not ignore. If those words have any significance they assure us that when Christ presented Himself as a Divine Teacher, He admitted that the people had a right to see His credentials, otherwise they would be justified in repudiating His claims. Not traditional authority but calm and deliberate reason was to settle the question then, as unshackled reason must settle it for us to-day. It was only the follower of tradition, the ignoble Pharisee, who asked, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?" His attitude was, "If I do not the works of my Father believe me not. But if I

do, believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in Me and I in Him." "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the very works' sake." Instead of considering the miracles of Christ contrary to reason, I look upon their performance as the highest compliment ever paid to human reason. Now Christianity as thus given was not apologetic. It required no pre-arranging of the wires or turning down of the light.

"These things were not done in a corner." In number and variety the works of Christ afforded abundant opportunity for exposure at the hands of the hostile Sauls, whose advantages had been immeasurably greater than those of the Nazarene. There was nothing cringing or obsequious on the part of Christ or His followers in presenting His claims. They boldly referred to Him as "a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know." My object in referring to these wonders is to show that authority had nothing to do with gaining converts to Christianity, that the system scorned extrinsic aids, whether of authority or the sword. It offered *phenomena* then, and these works, be it remembered, were denied by none during the early Christian centuries, or until converts had been multiplied in every civilized land. Men differed as to the explanation of the power, but none denied the facts. When Peter was defending himself for preaching to the Gentiles, he quotes no authority but says,

"While I spake the Holy Ghost fell on them as on us at the beginning. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as unto us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could withstand God?" Convinced by the authority of facts the Church prepared for her widened field of action.

But, as you may say these were special phenomena, I shall refer to another class equally susceptible of the most rigid examination, and inseparable concomitants of Christianity. I mean its effects on those who became Christians. The day was when no man knew what Christianity would do, or how it would affect the heart or the life. Its power was not seen or felt, miracles were absolutely necessary then. Faith was inspired by these wonders, a full belief of the truth was reached, the heart was renewed, new hopes were inspired, men became new creatures, and submitted to new rules of conduct. They "rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory, *receiving* the end of their faith the salvation of their souls." Here are the most important phenomena in Christianity, phenomena that must remain long as it endures, always accessible to the philosopher, always in the possession of the Christian. Let me be more specific. What Christianity offers to the scrutiny of science in her most rigid mood is the following:—A heart that was in love with sin and its concomitants, so changed that sin has become thoroughly distasteful, and right doing a second nature. Selfishness has been replaced by philanthropy, revenge by forgiveness, and the *lex talionis* by the golden rule—and all this not as an

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exceptional case, but in every case when the heart has been brought into sympathy with Christian truth. If there be in all the realm of Nature a set of facts capable of methodical and philosophical arrangement, Christianity contains these facts, and is, therefore, to be ranked among real science. I forget not the ages during which phenomena were seldom or never referred to, when her quickening power was entirely ignored or denied, and pseudo miracles formed the stock-in-trade to impress the ignorant and unenquiring masses with the divine character of the Church. Oh, the long and dreary night of almost total obscuration of the Sun of Righteousness! Here and there the faint glimmer of a star, the Albigenes, Waldenses, or Lollards—the seven thousand who had not bowed to the image of human authority, and their fealty to truth constituted them heretics. But even their theology had little of the phenomenal in it. From the early centuries until less than three centuries ago Christianity was offered to the world more as a shelter against “the wrath to come,” than as a purifier and sweetener of men’s lives here. More for what it would bring to us in the future state than for what it would make of us in this. Its transforming power was hardly ever referred to, and rarely indeed could a Christian be found who would muster courage enough to assert a knowledge of sins forgiven, or a change in the spirit of his mind. Such a statement would have been denounced as presumptuous in the extreme. Even less than two hundred years ago when some minister in England declared that all Christians experienced a change of

heart and possessed a conscious knowledge of peace with God, they were singled out as the butt of the ridicule and insult of almost the universal Church. You might express your hopes touching the future, but not your conscious experience in the *now*. We need not wonder that to the liberated intellect of the 17th century, after the rise of the inductive philosophy and the application of its method to Christianity, the Church should in a large degree fall into contempt. What did she present to the honest enquirer? A bleached skeleton for a living power, an authoritative dictum for an enquiring why. Splendid ceremonies for simple piety, and torturing fears for an honest doubt. The inductive philosophy gave a new impulse to the spirit of enquiry. Its birth was also the birth of skepticism, for skepticism is to a certain extent an accompaniment of philosophy. It is rational, yea religious, to doubt until you have reasonable grounds for faith, and if these be wanting, or covered up by the mantle of authority, doubting is your normal condition. Had the Church been alive when the inductive philosophy gained its great impulse, I venture the thought that religious skepticism had never been born. The Encyclopedists of France, found rich food for ridicule and wit, in the assumptions of a hierarchy that was rich in infallibility, pseudo miracles, and *post-mortem* rewards. How many Voltaires do you think would be found attacking Christianity when its converts were being multiplied in the persons of those whose hearts were really changed, and whose lives were "living epistles known and read of all." A living,

loving, aggressive Church is seldom annoyed by infidelity. It is in lands where men worship by statutory enactment or act of parliament, where the living outflow of the heart is repressed by stereotyped formula, or dammed up by ecclesiastic etiquette, that infidels and skeptics abound. You may put in the pulpit a Butler or a Paley with all their erudition and logic, or you may ravish the heart of your audience with the bewitching eloquence of a Saurin, a Fenelon or a Bossuet, and neither the logic of the one, nor the eloquence of the other will lessen the number of skeptics as much as the simple, earnest, evangelical address of the man who can point to his converts as his "crown of rejoicing." A Christianity without visible fruits is a hollow mockery, a very tantalus. It is chemistry without the laboratory. I respect the skepticism that on a matter of so much importance as religion, refuses to be put off with a *post-mortem* verification, and I am grateful to Christ for saying, "If any man wishes to do His will he shall know of the doctrine." That principle brings the verification of Christ's teaching to the consciousness of every honest searcher after truth. Since the phenomenal phase of Christianity has been gaining prominence, the system has been growing rapidly and steadily, and old-fashioned objections are being laid aside as very irrelevant. Is prayer really answered in the regeneration of man's nature is the living question now, for if that receives an affirmative response, all the essential claims of Christianity are admitted.

As believers in a living religion, we are glad that

the issue is thus joined. Science appeals to phenomena—unto phenomena she shall go. There is not to-day in Christian lands an article of belief more unchallenged than this, that God hears and answers His children. If you ask for the grounds of this belief, they will refer you to experience. The scientific world could hardly ask more. Do you ask for the character of the men, their calibre and culture, you will find them peers of the realm. Does their belief fluctuate? If so, it is strongest in their most thoughtful and serious hours, and gives inspiration to their most heroic deeds. Did they always believe thus? No! Many of them for years scoffed at prayer, and refused to bend the knee, but having experienced for themselves declare, "the half was not told me."

Do you meet a man who having led a prayerful life for a time, abandoned it? He will admit that it gave him his deepest comfort, his noblest inspiration, his brightest hopes, and his purest motives—and more, yea, overwhelmingly more, as a proof of its origin—it required as an essential pre-requisite the utter abandonment, in thought and action, of everything believed to be wrong, or even doubtful. "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me."

But, perhaps, an objector may choose a change of base, and say, "I admit that your witnesses are reliable, also that they are too numerous and too varied in their mental and moral idiosyncrasies to be all considered deceived. I admit also, that results the most satisfactory follow prayer, but you are certainly mistaken in your philosophy of the subject."

I might despatch the case now with the remark, that it is a curious anomaly of science to suppose that those who have never prayed are the only ones who understand it, and that the millions who have thoroughly tested its value, are forced to sit at the feet of those who have treated it with scoffs and sneers. But even granting for the moment that we are mistaken in our philosophy, there stand the ten thousand times ten thousand witnesses demanding recognition. It is replied that 'the divine interference in prayer is purely imaginary, the good results are simply the reflex influence of the mental act in prayer.' That is, the soul is quickened, its aspirations heightened, its desires after purity intensified, its love of God and man, of the true, the beautiful, and the good deepened, and all as the legitimate outgrowth of a lie. All through the reflex influence of an act so unphilosophical as to be condemned on *a priori* grounds.

Should it be still suggested that the elements of prayer, which are in accordance with truth, produce the beneficial results and neutralize the unphilosophical, I reply that unfortunately for the theory it is the part considered essential by those who pray, that is declared unphilosophical. Eliminate these features condemned by the objector, and prayer disappears. It then devolves on him to produce from the residuum the effect produced by prayer.

Longer I need not tarry here. Pure science has not a solitary protest against prayer. To phenomena she directs a respectful hand and an enquiring eye, with scrupulous care does she guard them till a theory is found

explanatory of all. She may allow the ages to pass as patiently she arranges the data of Nature, and awaits an interpretation, but no profane hand can do violence to these data. To the gaze of science, which a false philosophy has outraged, I bring prayer and its concomitants. I present the testimony of the purest and noblest of earth's heroes, "Men of whom the world was not worthy," I offer the living testimony of myriads who to-day live on the spirit of prayer, believing as fully in its efficacy as in their own identity. I call attention to the revivals of religion that have swept over our land, causing thousands of homes to rejoice ; to the thousands of all grades, the cultured, the refined, the philosophical, the literary, the rich, the poor, the skeptical, the degraded, who have on their solemn profession been elevated and comforted by prayer, and I ask for a recognition of these facts, and a philosophy, if possible. For these phenomena of soul, pure science as patiently seeks a cause as for the fall of an apple, or the revolution of the spheres. To ignore their existence for want of an adequate cause, would be scientific suicide. Atheistic science, the sensuous and materialistic schools all lose their foundation if prayer be admitted, hence the above phenomena are denied, in violation of the great philosophical principle of "integrity," that *all* data must be considered before the law be declared.

I would hardly be justified in taking a moment of your time in answering the vulgar notion that since the senses attest not spiritual things, they are consequently clouded in uncertainty. Grant that prayer

accomplishes what is claimed for it, namely, the renewal of man's nature, the removal of his sense of condemnation, the entire change of his hopes and fears, of his aspirations and purposes. What sense could attest it? What sense attests love or hate? Would you ask the eye about harmony? or the ear about colours, or odors? When in answer to the question, "How do you know you are benefited by prayer?" my cloud of witnesses reply, "We are conscious of it—we feel it," they have given at once the most familiar, the most philosophical, and the most cogent reason. Consciousness is the one witness that can neither be bluffed nor bought. You see I risk every thing on phenomena, and in doing so join the hands of a rational science and a living Christianity. "Whom God hath joined together let not man put asunder." But true science exposes a dead Church, as a living Church laughs at a false science. "What will you do with a Church that is destitute of spiritual power? That never talks of revivals or answers to prayer?" "Let Baal plead for himself," I answer, in the words of Joash. I adduce it not in such a discussion as this, any more than I would exhibit before you a corpse to illustrate the agility, strength, or intellectual scope of a man. "What can such a Church do?" It can invite the Great Quickener, and arise from the dead; or it may busy itself in endless genealogies, in perfecting its ceremonies, in seeking how closely it may imitate the Church of the Middle Ages, and yet appear in harmony with a Christian *renaissance*—we use not the dead but the living in our discussion. We seek not the living

among the dead. And of Churches we would say as of organic nature *omne vivum ex vivo*.

Science is deserving of our lasting esteem and gratitude, for having given to the world more rational conceptions of the universe, and its Author and Controller. It has laid us under perpetual obligations to it, by carrying even to our holy of holies its most exacting tests. It has taken from the heart of the Church a load that would have crushed a very Atlas, in the snapping of human authority, and the assertion of intellectual freedom, a freedom without which religion is the veriest absurdity, and it has yet a service to render that will prove of incalculable value, in leading the Church to discriminate between what is essential in Christianity and what is not. I would apply Mr. Mill's Canon of Inductive inquiry to our theology. Here is a man with strong leanings towards Apostolic Succession, Infant Baptism, and Eternal Punishment as conscious torment. Here is another who agrees with him on neither the first nor the last doctrine, and yet "God who knoweth the heart puts no difference between them but purifies both by faith."

Now, Mr. Mill's 1st Canon "the method of agreement," would suggest at once that those doctrines about which they differ were not essentials, that it must have been those on which they agreed that wrought the beneficial result. They agreed on baptism. But there must have been some other element more essential; for here is a third Christian, as surely converted as either, and he differs from them in being an anti Pede-baptist. *Ergo*, agreement on baptism is not essential. More, that

neither of the other questions is truly essential. Press the Canon still further, and it will be found that among God's nobility, among those who have passed from darkness to light men differ, and that very widely on all questions, except a very few. Hence we are forced to infer that those form what may be considered essential truth. That God hates sin, but loves his creatures, and would have all men saved. That he has revealed himself to the world in the person of Christ. That faith in Christ saves from sin and regenerates the nature. That the Scriptures contain all necessary truth. That there will be a future life in which we shall receive the legitimate results of our conduct here. Outside this circle lies the Campus Martius of polemical theology, and it is sad to see the number that spend life there, armed *cap à pie*, for joust or tournament, theological gladiators, with a fair sprinkling of heresy-hunters. Now science would suggest that the Church be broad enough to contain all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, and evidence this love in life.

Unity in variety is Christian unity, and the Christian camp will always furnish opportunity for the exercise of a charity that shall cover a multitude of diversity of opinion on matters non-essential, while the unbroken body of Christ stands shoulder to shoulder with the face to the common foe. The rank and file of the Church, and let me say, our Anglo-Saxon commonsense are calling aloud for a shortening and simplifying of creed, and a more practical union of our forces. In this matter the children of this world are wiser than

the children of light. True, we have Evangelical Alliances, and the representative men of the different branches, smiling complacently, talk pleasantly of each other. But they part, and rival each other in their zeal, in perpetuating their peculiarities. Progressive science offers us a hint here, that we cannot much longer ignore.

I fancy I hear some say, "Well, if science has made us her debtor, the account is more than squared by the damages we could claim for injuries inflicted upon theology in her name."

"In addition to the discredit thrown upon a particular providence and answers to prayer, she has removed the Creator by her evolutionism."

All this I promptly and emphatically deny, and in the name of science too. There can be no denial of design, or final cause in nature, nor can there be a denial of the *phenomena* of prayer. All that science assumes is that whatever occurs takes place by the reign of law. Then I am reminded of the needless fears of the Church in the past.

Astronomy insisted upon the trip being made by the earth, instead of the sun. Geology repudiated the six literal days. The theory of plenary or verbal inspiration had doubts thrown on it. The universality of the deluge was doubted, then denied. Still God reigns, and Christianity lives. Vain our fears, and weak our faith; as fire to the gold dimmed by admixture, as winnowing to the golden grain, has the light of inquiry been to Christian and Biblical truth. And should the day come when it shall have been proved to the satis-

faction of men that all that has ever occurred can be referred to natural laws, it will not necessitate a doubt regarding Christ's works, or the efficacy of prayer. It would simply involve a new definition of a miracle. I know not that one soul less would pray because he had learned that his prayer was answered by natural instead of special law. Let inflexible law reign everywhere, who will reject it, provided that hearts can still be changed, sorrows alleviated and removed, ambitions aroused and ennobled?

I hardly think that we ought to enter our protest against God's evolving this universe, and us, as a part of it, by original law. To say the least, it is too late in the day for such an attitude. As searchers after truth, what right have we to a preference as to the *modus operandi* of the Creator? I am no evolutionist, although firmly believing in progressive grades, but I can see nothing in the attitude of pure science to alarm any intelligent Christian. If science can prove evolution true, I wish it were done to-day, for rest assured every error obscures to some extent the face of truth, and mars its symmetry. But *must* theology trim itself to accept the doctrine of evolution and cognate results? Not yet, I think. What have we forcing us to such a conclusion? A multitude of facts clamouring for a theory? No; but a theory looking for the first fact to support it. In a word, it is the inductive philosophy reversed, and science enters her solemn protest. Man is separated from the molecule by at least two links. Both being furnished, science could hardly insist upon a third. One, the

passage from the inorganic to the organic; the other the transmutation of one species into another. Now, it can hardly be considered unreasonable to ask for *one* case of each. Were even one furnished, the question would be forever settled. The fact that we are compelled to wait for both of the links, should moderate the ardour of those who declare it is a settled question. We appeal to those who have made microscopy and natural history a life work, and they tell us that protoplasm is inorganic, spontaneous generation a theory, and that even if we had been favored with a start from the inorganic, through either of these means, embryology and paleontology, or nature, both living and dead, repudiates the evolution theory.

Huxley himself admits, "It is my clear conviction that as the evidence now stands, it is not absolutely proven that a group of animals having all the characteristics exhibited by species in nature, has ever been originated by selection, whether artificial or natural," and if true of animals, it is equally true of plants. "Not a single instance of one species changing into another has yet been found." Both Darwin and his disciples admit that geology furnishes not one solitary illustration. This link is wanting. As to the first link, hear Tyndale himself, in closing an address at the Royal Institution. "I hardly think it necessary to summarize up what has been brought before you. In fact, the whole is but the summing up of eight months of incessant labour. From the beginning to the end of the enquiry, there is not, as you have seen, a shadow of evidence in favor of the doctrine of spon-

taneous generation. There is, on the contrary, overwhelming evidence against it. But do not carry away with you the idea sometimes erroneously ascribed to me, that I deem spontaneous generation impossible, or that I wish to limit the power of Nature in relation to life. My views on the subject ought to be well known. But possibility is one thing, and proof is another, and when in our day I seek for experimental evidence of the transmutation of the non-living into the living, I am led inexorably to the conclusion that *no such evidence exists*, and that in the lowest as in the highest of organic creatures, the method of nature is that life shall be the issue of antecedent life." I may add that since the above was written, Tyndale has pursued the matter still further, putting it to tests more crucial than any ever before applied, with results entirely confirmatory of the above. The first link is, as you see, also wanting. It is really refreshing to turn from the dogmatic assumptions of the lesser lights in science, to such men as Tyndale, Huxley, and Darwin, and to listen to their own admissions. Hear another. One acknowledged the world over as standing in the very front rank among scientists—a teacher of teachers—a man who by his own experiments and observations has furnished many a scientist with the materials for his books and lectures. I refer to Professor Virchow, of the University of Berlin. He is considered, I think, the highest living authority on the origin of man, so far as science knows anything about it. Recently, he took occasion to rebuke a spirit which was bringing, as he thought, true science into contempt by affirming

as science what was only in the condition of crude hypothesis, and in doing so, emphasized the following statement: "Until the long series of scientific enquiry necessary to prove the protoplasmic soul has been successfully conducted do not teach it." "We have no proof of spontaneous generation, and true science can afford to wait." "Scientific men know nothing whatever of the connection of the organic and the inorganic, and whatever their theories or speculations, they must not teach them as science." Of the physical basis of mind, taught by Dr. Carpenter, and several other prominent physicians, he says, "This is but a problem of science, and thus far an insoluble one; search for it, but do not teach it." And when he reaches his own specialty, the origin of man, he says, while acknowledging his sympathy with the theory that would connect men with the ape. "Every positive advance made in prehistoric anthropology has removed us further from the proof of any such connection. The fossil men of the remotest ages are just such men as we. They have heads that many of us would be happy to carry on our shoulders. There is a complete absence of any fossil evidence of a lower order of men than now exists, or of any connection between man and any other vertebrate animal." He thus remonstrates against teaching as the utterances of science, the doctrine of evolution, the protoplasmic soul, spontaneous generation, a physical basis of mind, and the animal origin of man.

I must add a later admission from Professor Tyndale in the *Fortnightly Review*:—"If asked

whether science has solved or is likely in our day to solve the problem of the universe, I must shake my head in doubt. Behind, and above, and around us the real mystery of the universe lies unsolved, and as far as we are concerned is incapable of solution. The problem of the connection of body and soul is as insoluble in its modern form, as it was in the prescientific ages.

"There ought to be a clear distinction made between science in a state of hypothesis, and science in a state of fact.

"And inasmuch as it is still in its hypothetical stage the ban of exclusion ought to fall upon the theory of evolution.

"The theory of evolution applied to the primitive condition of matter, belongs to the dim twilight of conjecture, and the certainty of experimental enquiry is here shut out.

"Those who hold the doctrine of evolution, are by no means ignorant of the uncertainty of their data, and they yield to it only a provisional assent.

"In reply to your question they will frankly admit their inability to point to any satisfactory experimental proof that life can be developed save from demonstrable antecedent life.

"I share Virchow's opinion that the theory of evolution in its complete form involves the assumption, that at some period of the world's history, there occurred what would now be called spontaneous generation. I agree with him that the proofs of it are still wanting.

"I hold with Virchow that the failures have been lamentable, that the doctrine is utterly discredited."

These extracts show that our fears touching science are all unnecessary and unreasonable; but had I a different set to quote, it should not alter the case. We should be glad to be shown our errors, and if we are clinging to any, they can be only sources of weakness to us. There are no men rendering better service to the cause of truth than those who patiently apply their mature minds to the settling of such questions as this. It is all in our favour that they are so little interested in religion as to have scarce a theological bent. What we want is the undoubted utterance of Nature. Pre-eminent specialists are they all, whose decisions are almost final.

To sum up this part, true science has not affected to the weight of a gossamer any essential truth of Christianity. It has, we are glad to say, abated somewhat our ardour in speculative theology.

A few words more and I am done. Science is the application of common sense to nature. Theology ought to be the application of common sense to matters spiritual and divine. Science rests on the firm foundation of experiment. Theology, as far as it is of practical benefit, has the same basis. Science was called from its empty and barren theorizing to the study of Nature, and since the day she responded to the call has presented vitality and symmetry. Theology, so far as she has listened to the Master's voice to "prove all things," and "hold fast the good;" to "taste and see that the Lord is good," and to cease busying herself about "end-

less genealogies " and " words to no profit," to interpret " the letter that killeth " by " the Spirit that giveth life," has afforded glimpses of her own native attractions, in her own beautiful garments. Science is God's one hand, theology the other. It is only when the hands are clasped that the circle of truth is complete. Sacred the one as the other, both call for the unsandaled feet and the uncovered head. I am glad that when the theological department was inaugurated, Faraday Hall stood up by its side, the bride adorned for her husband, each in its native attractions, winning and holding the love of the other. It is a pitiable sight to see a Christian afraid or ashamed of his Father's autograph in Nature. It is equally pitiable to see the scientist struggle to reduce himself to a clod. Let them join hands. When a better understanding hath been reached in both kingdoms, we may expect the day when every jarring chord shall be reduced to harmony, and through the whole circle of human thought we shall hear the music of the spheres, the grand *Te Deum* of intellectual and spiritual symmetry, the rational adoration of Him whose thoughts are the origin of the known as well as the unknowable.



THE
Divine Call to the Ministry:

A SERMON DELIVERED BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL UNION OF
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY, MAY 15TH, 1881.

BY THE
REV. E. B. RYCKMAN, D.D., F.T.L.

SERMON.

The Divine Call to the Ministry.

The Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.—*Acts* xx. 28.

Now then we are ambassadors for Christ.—2 *Cor.* v. 20.

AN unsent or self-sent ambassador would be an absurdity. St. Paul claims that his ambassadorship was authorised directly from heaven. He speaks of himself, again and again, as "*called* an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God," "not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead." He acknowledges the apostleship of his brethren in the college of apostles, because they had been personally commissioned by the Lord, but claims that he too had seen the Lord, and received a personal commission. "Christ sent me . . . to preach the Gospel (1st *Cor.* i. 17). In like manner he affirms that the pastors of the Church at Ephesus, whom he calls "elders" and "bishops," were appointed to their station by the Lord Jesus Christ, not personally, but by His personal successor, "the executive of the God-head," the Holy Ghost—"Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy

Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood."

The Ministry of the Gospel, therefore, is a divine vocation. It is not the birthright of a tribe or a family, as in Old Testament times. It is not a distinction to descend from father to son, like a title of nobility in modern times. Neither is it a mere profession, which a man may choose for himself, according to his own taste or interest; for the duties of which he may become qualified by study, pains, and time; and which he may continue to follow or may relinquish any moment at his pleasure. Much less is it an expedient to which a sentimental daintiness, or love of learned leisure may resort, in order to escape the fretting and toil, the conflict and care, of every-day life. It is a pastorate, a stewardship, an ambassadorship for God. Such are the leading views of it which the Scriptures give. Its functions must be admitted to be the most dignifying and blessed that a man can exercise. They are also the weightiest and most sacred. —(*Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*.)

In its very nature the Christian Ministry supposes a divine designation, authorization, and warrant. No abilities, natural or acquired, no merely human encouragements and sanctions, can, of themselves, constitute the right to assume the office, or confer the qualifications necessary for fulfilling its duties. The words of St. Paul touching another office, the High Priesthood, are quite applicable here,—“No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron;” or, as John Newton has said, “None

but he who made the world can make a minister of the Gospel."

Under what particular form a call to the ministry is to be looked for and recognized; what are its proper signatures, certificates, and vouchers; how the Church of Christ may distinguish; how those who believe themselves to be the subjects of such a call may themselves distinguish between an imaginary call and a real one, a spurious and a genuine one, are questions which are often asked, but not easily answered so as to cover all possible instances; yet there are certain well-defined tests which reason and Scripture are agreed to hold as of universal application in the case.

We shall speak of the evidences of a Divine Call to the Ministry under two heads, namely:—

I. Evidences by which the subject himself should be assured of the validity of the call; and

II. Evidences by which the Church should be satisfied in recognizing and countersigning the call.

I. The evidences to the subject himself we shall discuss under two heads, namely, the Internal and the External Call; or, the Voice of God and the Voice of the Church.

1. The Internal Call is the word and power of the Holy Ghost impressing the heart, influencing the will, directing the judgment, and conveying personal qualifications. If a man be called of God to the ministry, there will be produced on his mind, by the Holy Ghost, the impression that it is his duty to consecrate his powers and his life to that work; not only that he ought diligently to employ his powers in bringing

souls to Christ, for every Christian must feel that he is under obligation to do that; but that it is his duty to make the ministry of the Gospel the one engagement of his life, saying,—

“ 'Tis all my business here below,
To cry, ‘Behold the Lamb.’ ”

Now there must be this individual conviction of such divine designation. The Church would clearly go beyond its province were it absolutely and alone to determine who are called to fill this sacred office. It is evident that the adoption of this principle would, by a moral necessity, make the voice of the pulpit, and all ministerial action, little more than the reflex of the opinions and character of the Church for the time being; it would set aside the prerogatives of the individual conscience and the sense of personal obligation to God in a domain where their rights have special claims to be heard and respected. It would draw a broader line of distinction between the ministry of the Jewish and that of the Christian Church, than the Word of God either demands or sanctions. It would put Christ's headship over His Church into commission within a sphere where many of His own declarations lead us to look for its most direct and authoritative exercise. It would reduce the action of the Holy Ghost, in one of His chief functions, to the level of the common course of Providence. It would involve the absurdity of the flock, not the Proprietor, appointing their Shepherd; the household, not the Lord of it, determining who shall manage his affairs; the people, to whom ambassadors

are sent in the way of grace, dictating to the Prince who commissions them, whom he shall choose to negotiate on his behalf.

Nor may parents, even godly parents, set apart one of their most stupid sons, not likely to shine in another profession, or to succeed in business, nor yet one of their most brilliant sons, as a preacher of the Gospel. God-fearing parents may consecrate their children from the hour of birth, and may pray that God would honour them with a call to the ministry; but fond parental desires and ambitions, however well meant, partake of the nature of a serious impertinence when they forestall the action of the Holy Ghost, and thrust one whom they may choose into the sacred office. Nor, as we have said, may any individual consult his own preferences, tastes, or ambitions in this matter. The honest belief of the *subject* that he is especially called to this work is surely indispensable to his undertaking it; for he who does not believe himself so called cannot but be an intruder into God's heritage, and however solemnly ordained, by whatever branch of the Church, his ordination is, *ipso facto*, vitiated and of none effect.

We speak of this inward Divine conviction first, because it is first, first always in point of importance, and, with rare exceptions, first also in order of time. In the great majority of cases where there is a Divine call, it is felt by the young convert constraining and encouraging him in his earliest efforts to win souls for Christ; and in some instances burdening the conscience of the sinner for years prior to his conversion, with

the conviction that he ought to give himself to God not only, but to the ministry also. Many a faithful and divinely-honoured minister, the evidences of whose call have brightened all along the path of his life-work, has testified that he withheld heart, and soul, and service from his Lord for many years, because he was convinced that if converted he must consent to preach the Gospel, while there were other lines of life more alluring to his worldly mind. But, come when it may, it is first always in importance. If a servant of Christ, living in communion with his Saviour, is thus inwardly impressed, he may proceed with confidence to his work. Yea, he *must* do so. He may not have as yet all the evidences of a call to the ministry, but the voice of the Lord ringing in the chambers of his soul is of paramount authority. But wanting this, let him beware how he attends to the counsels and opinions of ministers and other friends, which oftentimes are but ill-considered and dangerous flatteries, lest he make his whole life one prolonged, comprehensive blunder, by a blunder at the beginning.

But, it may be asked, "Is not here the principle of all fanaticism? Does not this leave the truth of Christ and the best interests of mankind at the mercy of a host of morbid fancies, dreams, and misguided aspirations? How is one to know that his impression is from God, and is not an imagination of his own mind, or even a temptation of the devil?"

(a) We reply that the Spirit of God, who speaks in this case, is capable of making Himself understood. A truly Divine call is, first of all; self-evidential. It

brings with it its own credentials. Of course, it is assumed that the subject is living a life of obedience, is accustomed to communion with God through the Divine Spirit, is one to whom the movements of the Spirit in his heart are a familiar experience, is desirous of knowing God's will concerning him, and praying, "Lord, what would'st thou have me to do?" The Spirit of the Lord said to Philip, "Go near, join thyself to this chariot." But Philip was in the way of obedience. An angel had previously said to him, "Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza." And he was going, not knowing how far he was to go, nor what he was to do. *Then* the Spirit said, "Go near, join thyself to this chariot." What was this but an impression (offensive, as the word is to some persons when employed in this sense) so strong and clear, that he had no doubt of its being from God? St. Paul prayed thrice for the removal of his troublesome thorn. It was not removed. God answered his prayer better than he thought. He lets the thorn remain, but nullifies the evil by enriching His servant with more abundant grace. St. Paul's own account of it is exceedingly impressive: "And He said to me, My grace is sufficient for thee." And how did the Lord Jesus say this to St. Paul? By an outward, audible voice? No, but by what we might call an inward voice. Directly, by His Spirit, He gave His servant intelligible, sufficient answer to his prayer. Let a child of God say, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth," and he may as clearly cognize the Spirit's

word in his soul as Philip or Paul. Nay, men have oftentimes wished to shake off this impression, and have striven variously to do so, and to persuade themselves that it was not from God, but all in vain, feeling more and more, "woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel."

But the Christian heart is accessible to the suggestions of the devil, and it may be asked how one can distinguish between these and the movements of the Holy Ghost. If one has begun to listen to the divine voice, he will recognize familiar tones. The voice that now urges so gently, yet persistently, "You ought to preach the Gospel," he recognizes as the very voice that for years continued to say "You ought to be a Christian." But cannot Satan simulate the divine voice? Yes. In the western wilds the blood-thirsty panther so exactly imitates the wail of a lost child, that the unsuspecting traveller is turned aside from his path by compassionate feeling, and lured to his death. But the old hunter is not deceived. He has heard that cry before. So the unspiritual, the unwatchful, the selfish, the sinful, may be deceived by the devices of the adversary, but not the child of God in communion with his Father. He has the advantage of knowing his foe and his true outwardness, because his senses have been exercised to discern both good and evil. In a word, when God speaks in the human soul, He speaks with authority so unmistakable as to distinguish His utterances from the phantasies of our own minds, and the deceptions of Satan. The intonations of His voice are so peculiar as to be

recognized sooner or later as clearly as when He walked in Eden and conversed with our first parents. We say sooner or later, because God may make the manner of His address to our consciousness a part of our discipline. His first utterances may be faint and indistinct, in order to test the promptness and willingness of our obedience to the divine mandate; but the more promptly and unselfishly we obey, the more clearly will the path of duty appear, and the more certainly we shall know as we follow on to know the Lord.

(b) But this persuasion wrought in one's mind by the Spirit will be corroborated in a great variety of ways. Answers will be given to prayer, and the utterances of Scripture will be powerfully applied to the mind. One says (Rev. Owen Stockton): "I set apart a day for fasting and prayer, to ask counsel of God whether I should preach or not, and by powerfully impressing on my mind these Scriptures He showed me my duty—'As much as lieth in you feed the flock;' 'Necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel;' 'In the morning sow thy seed;'" and other passages are quoted by him in the same connection.

A young man attending, in former years, that University had strong apprehensions of his designation to the ministry, even prior to his conversion. After he had experienced a change of heart he felt willing to follow Christ anywhither, but seriously doubted his call. He believed, however, that he might obtain direction, and, therefore, fasted and prayed and waited

upon God ; and at length gave himself to the Church, to be put into the ministry, fully convinced that that was the will of God concerning him. But no sooner had he conformed to the initial requirements than misgivings such as he had never experienced before took possession of his mind. They were overwhelming. For the moment, the devil had clothed himself with light. At a late hour one evening, fearing that after all his fasting and praying he had taken the wrong step at last, he was mentally discussing measures by which he might undo what he had done, when in great perplexity and distress he took up his Bible, and, falling upon his knees, asked God for light and direction ; then opening the Book he began to read, "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in My holy mountain." To him it was as the voice of God. His doubts were dissipated and never returned. His convictions were established. Now we do not commend Bibliomancy, nor believe in haphazard with the Word of God, a book for study and not for divination ; nevertheless the Spirit who inspired the Word, and inspires the loving heart, speaks in the Word and in the heart with harmonious accord.

(c) Moreover, this impression may be known to be genuine because it is an impulse proceeding, not upon considerations of self-interest, nor of desire to provide for one's self and family, motives innocent, yea, laudable in secular business, but criminal here ; nor of ambition, avarice, or love of ease, criminal everywhere ; but upon considerations that respect only God's glory,

the good of His Church, the salvation of lost men, doing the will of God and sacrificing one's self entirely to His service, and that of the humblest of His flock. Matthew Henry, for instance, wrote just before his ordination, "I hope I can say that I act herein from a principle of real love to precious souls, for the good of which I would gladly spend and be spent. I hope I know so well the worth of souls that I should think it a greater happiness to gain one soul to the Lord Jesus Christ than to gain mountains of gold and silver to myself."

Here then are the evidences that this impression is not a mere imagination or misguided bias: it carries with it its own credentials; it is corroborated and strengthened from day to day in communion with God by faith and prayer; it is clear and unmistakable in proportion to the fervor and faithfulness of personal consecration, and regards always the glory of God in the salvation of souls.

(d) Another kind of evidence that must be connected with the foregoing in considering the internal call, is the delight and consciousness of the divine approval which are experienced in obeying the monitions of the Spirit. Yielding to His behests will tend to brighten God's approving smile upon the heart, while resisting will tend to banish it. This is evidence barely secondary in importance to the foregoing. If a man's soul does not prosper while he ministers, or if the duties of his vocation are irksome to him, he may safely conclude that he is not called to that work. A man would be happier as a scullion, or

as a hod-carrier, with the peace of God, than in exercising the functions of an ambassador of the King of Heaven, if not divinely commissioned. And if a man has been guilty of the unholy presumption of thrusting himself into this office, or permitting himself to be thrust in by others, when not called of God, how can his soul prosper? On the other hand, in proportion as the Spirit of the Lord is with His servant, he lives and moves in an atmosphere of holy joy, his duties are his delight, his soul is refreshed in preparing his sermons, his meditations on a subject with a view to benefit others are a means of grace to himself, he is made to disrelish all studies that do not contribute to his efficiency as a preacher of the gospel, and that he may water others, God more abundantly waters him. Therefore, if a man finds his soul happy in his work and prospering in piety, so far forth he has evidence that he is called of God to the ministry; if otherwise, the presumption is that he is not so called.

These two things, namely, the inwrought conviction, and the spiritual delight and improvement consequent upon obeying it, are the evidences of the fact of an inward call, which we must speak of as indispensable in entering upon ministerial life. It is a *sine qua non*. It is the presumptive ground on which the Church delegates her authorized commission. No man has a right to assume the office, nor has the Church authority to induct into it any one who does not believe, and by his piety, endowments, and zeal, give proof of the validity of his belief, that he is inwardly moved by

the Holy Ghost to execute its functions. But with this inward call, and the felt approval of God in responding thereto, men have gone forth without the ratification of the Church's judgment, or *imprimatur* of the Church's authority, to find Church doors shut against them, and Church members their persecutors ; to meet, at least at first, with but indifferent success ; and yet have gone from victory to victory, because He who had called them to their work and qualified them therefor, was able to establish the work of their hands upon them. These, it is true, may be exceptional cases, but they show the transcendent importance of the internal call. While a man must not go without it, with it he must, though required to go with that alone.

2. We come now to the consideration of the External Call as evidence to the subject of his divine vocation to the holy ministry.

(a) As we have said, the Internal Call is the voice of God in the soul of the individual, summoning him to the work ; the External Call is the voice of the Church substantiating, seconding, and endorsing the summons. It is a commission received from, and recognized by the Church ; not calling strictly, but countersigning a call previously given by God ; not qualifying, but accrediting him whom God had previously, internally, and suitably qualified. But he who draws the attention of the Church as likely to prove an effective labourer in the Gospel, for whom the Church provides work and opens doors of usefulness,

has herein strong confirmation of the authenticity of his call.

This is evidence of great corroborative value, but quite insufficient of itself. Public investment with ministerial authority has not always been accompanied by the inward call. Many have entered into the sacred office with hearts unenlightened by Christian truths, and unimpressed with ministerial obligations, that is to say, with hearts unrenewed. Scott, the eminent commentator, confesses that, for a length of time, he preached the Gospel without a knowledge of it. Walker, of Truro, makes a similar confession. Berridge, of Everton, tells us that two years at Everton, and six years previously at another place, he laboured diligently and earnestly for the salvation of souls without a particle of success, and then discovered that he himself was not saved. John Wesley says, "It is now upwards of two years since I left my native country to teach the Georgia Indians the nature of Christianity; but what have I learned myself in the meantime? Why (what I least of all suspected) that I who went to America to convert others was never converted myself." But although some who were unqualified and unauthorized at first, have been successfully employed by the Head of the Church after their conversion, many others have continued blind leaders of the blind until they have fallen into the ditch with those they were incompetent to lead; or have, at length, retired in disgust from a work distasteful to them, because, though authorized by the Church, they were unacceptable to God. However, it is to be expected

that when God designates one of His servants to the ministry of his Word, he will open the door into some branch of His Church, and secure the External Call.

(b) In addition to this, we remark that the Providence of God, as commonly understood, will afford more or less confirmation of this call. This is the "wheel within a wheel" moving in harmonious conjunction with, but in direct subserviency to, the purposes of God, respecting His Church. If God, by Providential arrangement, will direct the choice of a secular calling, how much more the calling to His own work, a matter so intimately connected with the interests of His own kingdom. The Providential disposing, therefore, of a person's circumstances, thoughts, inclinations, and studies to this main end; the disappointment of his plans for another course of life; the unexpected and repeated closing up of worldly avenues; some particular crisis in the individual sphere; some change or influence of family circumstances; one or more of these may prove the "word behind him, saying, 'This is the way, walk ye in it.'"

(c) Another branch of evidence which must be considered in connection with this in examining the External Call is the success which attends the heaven-sent messenger. Wherever there is a divine call, there is a sure word of promise, "Lo, I am with you alway." But if one run unsent his labours must prove unblest. "I sent them not, nor commanded them, therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord." The blight was not that their doctrine was unsound, but that they preached unsent. God will seal His own

ordinance, but not man's usurpation. It is true there are other causes of ill-success, such as defect of personal piety on the part of the preacher, coldness on the part of the Church, the enmity of the natural heart, and the power of Satan, so that though there be no immediate success, we are not to conclude hastily that the absence of a divine call is the cause. Simeon, of Cambridge, we are told, preached for a length of time, to a humble congregation who stood in the aisles of the church, because the pews were deserted and locked; but, forasmuch as he preached evangelical truths upon God's authority, he, in course of time, gained the victory—a full church and many souls. Many most devoted men have laboured at times without any visible results, and overwhelmed by discouragement have demitted their toil, and fled the field; but re-considering their duty, have retraced their steps, resumed their work, and rejoiced in abundant success. But while other causes *may* produce ill-success, this cause, the absence of a real call, *must* do so. On the other hand, if God gives the sincere minister souls, he may regard them as seals to his ministry.

These we regard as the evidences of a divine call to the subject himself—first, the impression infixed by the Holy Ghost; second, happiness and personal spiritual prosperity in the work; third, the providential opening of the doors of the Church, and of paths of usefulness; and fourth, gracious success in the prosecution of ministerial labours.

II. We now take up the second of our leading divisions, namely, the evidences on which the Church may

rely in giving the sanction of its authority to a professed call to preach the gospel. That it is the duty of those who believe themselves to be called of God, to seek a commission at the hands of the Church also, our Lord has taught us in the most impressive manner possible by applying to John for baptism just before entering upon His public career, and by the language He employed in explanation of His act. Nor will there be much danger of error on the part of the Church where its spiritual life is real and active, for it will not lack the material for a correct judgment, and here, if anywhere, it may look for the extraordinary guidance of its Head. A man who is notoriously wicked and worldly may claim to exercise the ministerial office; but his pretensions are nullified by his character; for moral blamelessness and visible spirituality of mind are its lowest pre-requisites. It may happen again that though the candidate for the ministry may be unexceptionably, or even exemplarily Christian, he may show a mental feebleness, an ignorance of the gospel and of the word of God, or an inaptness for the duties of a public religious instructor, which must be held as decisive against the validity of his ministerial call. Or, once more, the best gifts of nature, and many of the choicest fruits of liberal and Christian culture may be associated with a stuntedness or sickliness of religious growth, which forbids the idea of a co-existing authority to do the work of an evangelist. Wickedness, earthliness, unacquaintance with the truth, inability to teach, defective Christian experience and life,—any one of these is a barrier to

the ministry, which no man who knows what he is doing will either venture himself to leap over, or attempt to foist others over.

But how is the Church to judge when hindrances like these have no place? Sometimes the heart of a wise and faithful man is seen to flame with a passionate concern for the salvation of others, which the Church at once recognizes with awe and joy as the indication of a divine commission. In other instances a peremptory sense of duty to God will constrain a man to take the necessary steps for securing admission to the sacred office, and so to assume a load from which his nature shrinks with unutterable dread. And human suggestions may be the means by which God will direct the thoughts of some of His elect servants to their vocation, and stir them up to seek the preparations and authentications which its duties demand.

In saying what we have to say further on this subject, perhaps we cannot do so better than by touching three questions always considered by one who was the greatest ecclesiastical legislator and organizer of his day; and who was required in the providence of God to adjudicate upon the vocation of many hundreds—Has he grace? Has he gifts? Has he fruit?

1.—*No man can be a true Christian minister who has not the grace of God.* No natural abilities, however splendid, can answer alone the demands of the ministry. No human learning can possibly countervail the want of being inly taught of God. No mode of ordination, Popish or Protestant, Episcopal or Presbyterian; no kind of appointment, state-appointment,

congregation-appointment, or self-appointment—can supply the lack of the divine anointing, without which the souls of men can neither be converted nor edified. If he have the grace of God, it will appear in his holy life and godly conversation. These the Church is to consider, and upon these form its judgment. But the evidence is conclusive only on one side. If the candidate has not personal piety, then certainly he has not, at present, a divine call to the ministry. If he has personal piety, then it is probable, nothing more, that he has such a call. Every true Christian is not divinely intended for the ministry. The examples of Aquila and Priscilla, and the various helpers of the primitive Church mentioned in the Apostolic salutations, clearly prove that devotedness to the cause of God has always been, as it is now, a component and acceptable part of Christian obligation. In this wide field of service, laymen may exhibit the spirit of the ministry in perfect consistency with their secular employment, and without an unauthorized intrusion upon the express commission of the sacred office, labour successfully for the salvation of souls. A controlling desire to save sinners conjoined to personal piety is not a sufficient warrant that one is called to the ministry. That desire every Christian possesses in a greater or less degree. A desire to enter the ministry superadded is not sufficient. He out of whom the legion was cast desired to be one of the disciple band, but Christ sent him to his home, to his friends, and to his secular vocations.

2.—*In the second place, has he gifts?* The man

who obeys God's call He will take care to endow with every necessary qualification. God makes wise those who turn unto Him. Every genuine minister of Christ has, at all events, a renewed heart, an enlightened mind, and an experimental knowledge of the way of salvation. Perhaps it is not too much to say that God never did call a man to the ministry whom He did not qualify in such a manner as made both the workman and the work appear to be of God. Of the existence of these qualifications in the candidate, the Church undertakes the difficult and delicate task of judging. If he be deficient or unbalanced in intellect, it may be safely assumed that there is no divine call. If there be great ignorance, especially of divine things, it may be concluded there is no call. A teacher of the souls of men must be apt to teach. Wesley asks, "Has he in some tolerable degree a clear, sound understanding? Has he a right judgment in the things of God? Has he a just conception of salvation by faith? Has he an effective utterance?" These questions should all be affirmatively answered; and yet supreme over all these considerations is God's right to call whom He pleases. In this particular work God has often "chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence." Why did not Jesus Christ call some of the learned and eminent Scribes and Pharisees to preach

his gospel, and not humble, unlearned fishermen without credit or authority? Because it was the Kingdom of Heaven they were to preach, and their teaching must come from above. As the instruments were comparatively lowly, and the work accomplished by them grand and glorious, the excellency of the power appeared at once to be of God and not of men—(*Dr. Clarke*). Theological schools, in the order of God's Providence, have great and important uses, and in reference to such uses are to be regarded with respect, but they cannot make preachers of the gospel. That is a power and prerogative God never did, and never will delegate to man. Where a dispensation of the gospel has been committed to a man, a good education will be of great general use: the more education the better. But it no more follows that because a man has a good education he is called to preach the word, than it does that, because he has not, he is not so called. There may be much ignorance of divine things where there is much human learning; and on the other hand, a man may be well taught in the things of God and able to teach others also, who has not the advantage of a liberal education. Let the Church of God ascertain that a man's gifts, be they humbler or higher, are employed by their Creator in the ministry of the gospel, and then promptly endorse the divine vocation by the issue of a commission.

3.—*And lastly, has he fruit?* Are any truly convinced of sin and converted to God by his preaching? Admitting that there are rare exceptions in which the truth of God is blessed to the salvation of sinners,

although proceeding from the lips of an unsanctified intruder, yet we strongly hold that a divinely authorised ministry may be distinguished by its fruits. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits." This Scripture applies to all other tests of ministerial character and claims, but it applies with especial force to this one. If during the probationary term, established in some form by all branches of the Church, no souls are brought from Satan to God, it is evidence on which the Church may refuse, and we think ought to refuse, to substantiate the call. God sends forth His ambassador to proclaim a present reconciliation ; and above all things it is to be expected that sinners will be converted and believers edified by his preaching. His bodily presence may be weak and his speech contemptible; his first efforts, judging according to man's judgment, may be exceedingly feeble ; his ecclesiastical order may be unacknowledged, his education may be limited, his style faulty, and the proud and pedantic may turn away in contempt because his "preaching is not with enticing words of man's wisdom ;" but poor sinners will be wounded and healed, because it will be "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." If these effects, in some degree follow not a man's message, it is not a message from God. He may have a legal control of certain pulpits, and a legal right to certain emoluments, but authority from God he has none. How contemptible are the claims of that man to recognition as a true minister of Jesus, yea, the *only* divinely authorized and properly

qualified minister, who boasts of his clerical education, his sacerdotal order, his legitimate authority to preach and administer the sacraments, while no soul is benefited by his ministry.—(*Dr. Clarke*).

When the antecedent profession has been made by the candidate himself, of a hearty belief that God has called him to preach His gospel, then those three matters, grace, gifts, and fruit, come properly and in order under the Church's scrutiny. They embrace, we believe, everything by which a judgment can be formed, and hereby the Church must be satisfied, or otherwise, of the validity of a divine call to the ministry.

Now upon this basis of evidence let us establish a point or two of practical application.

1. *To Young Men*.—If any of you are looking towards the ministry, beware how you listen to the voice of self-interest or of the world, or of Satan, or of friends—even Christian friends—or any other voice than that of the Holy Ghost. A station in the ministry is one of respectability; the influence wielded by a minister, as a man, is a wide-reaching influence; wealth through his profession may lie all outside his dreams, but his temporal wants will be fairly supplied without the anxieties, vicissitudes, and reversals incident to business life; but none of these considerations—the highest respectability, the most commanding influence, the utmost physical comfort of life, the richest literary enjoyment, should tempt you for a moment to enter upon this vocation unless you believe in your heart that you are moved thereto by the Holy Ghost. You

may not realize one of your expectations. If you realize them all, and more, your life will be poisoned, and all satisfactions nullified, by the fact that you are only a usurper of the sacred office. On the other hand, if the Divine Spirit is impressing your mind with a sense of duty in this direction, *then* beware how you attend to the suggestions of self-interest, the world, Satan, or friends, in resisting such impressions. Bright avenues of worldly prosperity may open up before you; glittering distinctions in statesmanship, literature, and science may beckon to you; and these, in contrast with the dark side of ministerial life—its toils, its self-denials, its circumscriptions, its meagreness of remuneration and appreciation, may appear very attractive, yet consider that an honour is proffered to you that would be coveted by the highest angel in the third heaven. The eternal King appoints you His ambassador to alienated subjects in this outlying province of His dominion. The study and exposition of the Word of God is the grandest work on which the human intellect can be employed. No other science will compare for a moment, either in sublimity or difficulty, with the science of theology. No other book raises so many questions, answerable and unanswerable, as the Bible, or brings to your notice so many mysteries, or starts the inquiring mind off in so many lines of blessed, exciting, remunerating thought. All the golden veins in those rocks yield the precious metal in paying quantities. The chief conflicts of this and the coming day—intellectual encounters which are to draw the attention of the world,

are to be fought on this ground, and thrice happy is that man whose arm God endows with strength to wield the sword of truth with telling effect.

Consider also the melancholy examples we have of blighted lives through disobeying the call of God to the ministry. Men have addressed themselves to business, or to the practice of a profession, carrying all the while the conviction that they ought to preach the gospel; and failures in business, disappointments in personal and family affairs, and especially the unfruitfulness of a soul left in leanness by a spirit disobeyed and grieved, all attest the folly of choosing for one's self in this matter instead of yielding to be guided and employed by God. The issues of a mis-step are tremendous. If you would blast your life to the end, you may do so most effectually, either by entering the ministry uncalled, or by refusing to enter when God points the way. "Acknowledge Him in all thy ways, and He shall direct thy paths."

2. *To the Official Members of our Churches.*—According to the polity of Methodism, the laymen of the Quarterly Meetings have a prominent part to play and a corresponding responsibility to bear, in connection with the introduction of young men into the ministry. They stand at the door of entrance. They must guard it carefully and wisely. The duty is laid upon them, and they must perform it in the fear of God. Our intelligent and godly laymen are capable of judging of the gifts and usefulness of the candidates who may come before them, and if they fail to make themselves acquainted with the qualifi-

cations of the candidates proposed ; or give a "matter of course" recommendation to one whom they do not know ; or are influenced by fear or favour, in uttering their voice in the councils of the Church ; and, as a consequence, unworthy men are introduced ; they cannot escape a full share of the just blame attaching to the curse of an inefficient ministry.

You would not accept a young man because he is wealthy, nor reject him because he is poor. God must go for His ambassadors where He can find brains, and "competent abilities" are not always found among the sons of the rich. It is the well-known outcome of the operation of the irreversible law, that among the etiolated children of wealth, who live in luxury and indolence, brains as well as bodies deteriorate ; while oftentimes among the lowlier sons of toil, agriculturists and artizans, the finest fibre of brain as well as muscle is to be found, and there also all the professions find, from time to time, their most distinguished ornaments.

You would not reject a young man because he is uneducated. Some of the grandest preachers the world has ever known have arisen in humble life, whose early environments denied them the advantages of a liberal education, and who, indeed, only became aware of the fact that they had magnificent intellects to cultivate through the enlightening influence of the grace of God that converted their souls. Find young men of visible piety, warm sympathies, effective utterance, and *good material*, and place them in the hands of the Church—and it will be the Church's duty and pleasure to supply them, through

the admirable theological schools, with the requisite mental culture.

3. *To Parents.*—Sometimes, as we have said, parents err in devoting a son to the ministry without consulting the will of God in the matter; but sometimes, on the other hand, when the will of God appears, parents are unwilling to make what seems to them a sacrifice, and give a son to the ministry. He may be an only son. The field towards which he is drawn may be a foreign field. But O! look beyond this narrow life, and see present toils and sacrifices in the light of the future world. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." "God had but one Son, and made him a minister."

4. *A Word to One and All.*—Consider the reverent regard with which you should always listen to the message proclaimed by one who is really an ambassador for Christ. He asks no special respect—nothing beyond what you would accord to any other man his equal—except on this ground, he is a messenger of Heaven to you. He is divinely commissioned to bear to you a message of warning concerning the folly, guilt, and danger of sin; a proclamation of mercy and forgiveness through the atoning blood; and an invitation to the eternal glory of Heaven. Remember that you have no right to say to him, "Go thy way for this time," "We will hear thee again of this matter." Your first, present, positive, imperative duty, is to attend to the message, not out of respect for the

messenger merely, but for the Majesty that is behind him. It is a paltry thing to be thinking of and criticising the man,—his voice, his manner, his attainments, or want of them ; and wicked to make the imperfections of the messenger an excuse for making light of the message. That which was the strength of St. Paul and of every real Christian minister from that day to this, should be the most influential consideration with every hearer ; “ Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us : we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.”



OFFICERS FOR 1881-82.*President.*—REV. T. W. JEFFERY, Cobourg.*Vice-President.*—REV. JAMES ELLIOTT, D.D., Kingston.*Secretary-Treasurer.*—REV. A. M. PHILLIPS, B.D., Chatham.*Lecturer for 1882.*—REV. J. A. WILLIAMS, D.D., Goderich.*Preacher for 1882.*—REV. GEO. MCRITCHIE, Perth.**"FELLOWS."**

REV. S. S. NELLES, D.D., LL.D	Cobourg.
REV. N. BURWASH, S.T.D	Cobourg.
REV. W. JEFFERS, D.D	Lindsay.
REV. S. D. RICE, D.D	St. Mary's.
REV. J. ELLIOTT, D.D....	Brockville.
REV. E. H. DEWART, D.D	Toronto.
REV. E. B. RYCKMAN, D.D	Guelph.
REV. A. BURNS, D.D., LL.D.....	Hamilton.
REV. E. A. STAFFORD, B.A	Ottawa.
REV. W. W. ROSS	Hamilton.

LONDON CONFERENCE BRANCH.*President.*—REV. A. BURNS, D.D., LL.D., F.T.L.*Secretary-Treasurer.*—REV. A. M. PHILLIPS, B.D.**TORONTO CONFERENCE BRANCH.***President.*—REV. J. B. CLARKSON, M.A.*Secretary-Treasurer.*—REV. T. W. CAMPBELL, B.D.**MONTREAL CONFERENCE BRANCH.***President.*—REV. E. A. STAFFORD, B.A., F.T.L.*Secretary-Treasurer.*—REV. S. D. CHOWN.**COURSE OF READING FOR "FELLOWSHIP."**

The Course of Reading is to extend over three years, and to consist of Biblical, Historical, Doctrinal or Apologetic studies. The character of the Course shall be optional, *i.e.*, the subjects or branches of study may be elected by each one reading; *Provided* that two subjects shall be read for each year, one to be selected at the beginning of the Course

and continued throughout, and the other varied from year to year. The thoroughness of the reading will be tested by a thesis, to be assigned on the 15th of March and returned by the 30th of April, and a written examination upon the books read by means of questions sent to each one reading, to be answered and returned with the thesis. All persons reading must send application for subject of thesis to the Secretary by March 1st, stating the year in which they are reading, the Course subject, the option selected, and the books read. Each subject should be studied in at least two authors, from a comparison of which an independent opinion may be formed; and a student must put in at least one thesis each year until the Course is completed.

COURSE OF STUDY.

FIRST YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study*.—The Life of Christ. Text-books: The Four Gospels; Westcott's Introduction to the Study of the Gospels; Andrew's Life of Christ; Geikie's or Farrar's Life of Christ.
2. *Historical Study*.—The Reformation; D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation; Seeborn's Protestant Revolution; Fisher.
3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Atonement. The Text-books: Crawford; Randles; Miley.
4. *Apologetic Study*.—God and Nature. Text-books: Cocker's Theistic Conception of the Universe; Buchanan's Modern Atheism; Peabody's Science and Religion.

SECOND YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study*.—The Epistle to the Romans. Aids: Lange, Philippi and Beet.
2. *Historical Study*.—Life and Times of Wesley. Tyerman's Life; Smith's Methodism and Southey's Life; Isaac Taylor's Methodism; Watson's Reply to Southey.
3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Person of Christ. Pope's Person of Christ; Liddon's Bampton Lecture on our Lord's Divinity; Glover's Historical Sketch of the Doctrine of Christ's Person.
4. *Apologetic Study*.—Rationalism. Hunt's History of Rationalism; Fisher's Supernatural Origin of Christianity; Mansell's Limits of Religious Thought.

THIRD YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study*.—The Psalms. Lange, Perowne, Tholuck.
2. *Historical Study*.—Modern Theology. Dorner's History of Protestant Theology; Rigg's Modern Anglican Theology.
3. *Doctrinal Study*.—Christian Perfection. Wesley's Christian Perfection and Sermons, with Burwash's Notes; Fletcher's Last Check; Pope's Theology, Vol. III.
4. *Apologetic Study*.—Inspiration. Bannerman, Lee, Elliott, Pope's Theology, Vol. I.

MEMBERS ENROLLED SINCE ORGANIZATION,
MAY, 1877.

LONDON CONFERENCE.

Ames, Rev. Wm.	Leith, Rev. T. B.
Bridgman, Rev. W.	Mitchell, Rev. G. A., B.A.
Bristol, Rev. Coleman, M.A.	Mooney, Rev. Jas.
Broek, Rev. Thos.	Morrow, Rev. C. R.
Burns, Rev. A., D.D., LL.D., F.T.L.	McCulloch, Rev. A. M.
Burns, Rev. Robt.	McDonagh, Rev. Wm.
Calvert, Rev. G. W.	Neelands, Rev. John
Chown, Rev. E. A., B.D.	Parker, Rev. Wm. R., M.A.
Clark, Rev. Geo.	Penhall, Rev. Wm.
Clarke, Rev. T. R.	Phillips, Rev. A. M., B.D.
Cobb, Rev. Thos.	Philp, Rev. John, M.A.
Colling, Rev. Thos., B.A.	Philp, Rev. Jos.
Colling, Rev. Joseph S.	Rigsby, Rev. W.
Cornish, Rev. Geo. H.	Ross, Rev. W. W., F.T.L.
Edwards, Rev. W. W.	Ross, Rev. J. S., B.A.
Fallis, Rev. J. G.	Russ, Rev. A. E., M.A.
Foote, Rev. Jas. G.	Ryckman, Rev. E.B., D.D., F.T.L.
Freeman, Rev. J. W., B.D.	Saunders, Rev. J., M.A.
Graham, Rev. Jas.	Scott, Rev. J., M.A.
Gray, Rev. Jas.	Sellery, Rev. S., B.D.
Griffin, Rev. W. S.	Shilton, Rev. J. W., B.A.
Guest, Rev. Jos.*	Smylie, Rev. R.
Gundy, Rev. J. R.	Stafford, Rev. C. E.
Hall, Rev. H. M.	Staples, Rev. S. G.
Hamilton, Rev. C.	Stevenson, Rev. E. B., B.A.
Hannon, Rev. Jas.	Stewart, Rev. J.
Hawkins, Rev. Chas., B.A.*	Sutherland, Rev. D. G., B.D.
Henders, Rev. R. C.	Swann, Rev. F.
Henderson, Rev. Wm. C., M.A.	Teskey, Rev. E.
Hodson, Rev. J. M., B.A.	Waddell, Rev. R. H., B.D.
Hunter, Rev. J. E.	Wakefield, Rev. J.
Isaac, Rev. J. R.	Ward, Rev. Jos., B.A.
Jackson, Rev. T. W.	White, Rev. Jas. H.
Kay, Rev. J.	Williams, Rev. J. A., D.D., F.T.L.
Lanceley, Rev. J. E.	Williams, Rev. Wm.
Langford, Rev. Alex.	Wilson, Rev. Jasper, B.A.

* Deceased.

TORONTO CONFERENCE.

Addison, Rev. P.	Lewis, Rev. E. D.
Allen, Rev. J. E.	Liddy, Rev. Jas.
Barkwell, Rev. J. H., B.A.	Lloyd, Rev. W. W.
Barrass, Rev. E., M.A.	Manning, Rev. T., B.A.
Barltrop, Rev. A. J.	McAuley, Rev. S.
Bell, Rev. J. W., B.D.	McCamus, Rev. D. N.
Blackstock, Rev. W. S.	McCarroll, Rev. J., M.D.
Boddy, Rev. Jas.	McClung, Rev. J. A.
Brown, Rev. George	McDonald, Rev. D., M.D.
Burns, Rev. R. N., B.A.	McDougall, Rev. J.
Burwash, Rev. N., S.T.D., F.L.T.	McLean, Rev. J.
Burwash, Rev. N. S.	Nelles, Rev. S. S., LL.D., F.T.L.
Campbell, Rev. T. W., B.D.	Philp, Rev. S. C., Jr.
Clarkson, Rev. J. E., M.A.	Potter, Rev. A.
Cullen, Rev. Thos.	Potts, Rev. J., D.D.
Crowle, Rev. Fred. W., B.A.	Reynolds, Rev. Geo. S.
Dewart, Rev. E. H., D.D., F.T.L.	Rice, Rev. S. D., D.D., F.T.L.
Edmison, Rev. T. J., B.D.	Robson, Rev. E.
Edwards, Rev. Fred.	Rose, Rev. S. P.
Ferguson, Rev. T. A.	Robison, Rev. M. *
Greatrix, Rev. B. G.	Rupert, Rev. E. S., M.A.
Greene, Rev. J.	Rutledge, Rev. W. L.
Harper, Rev. E. B., D.D.	Scott, Rev. W. L.
Harper, Rev. Cecil, M.A.	Shorey, Rev. S. J.
Hewitt, Rev. G. W., B.A.	Steele, Rev. T. P.
Hill, Rev. L. W., B.A.	Stewart, Rev. A., B.D.
Howell, Rev. J. E., M.A.	Stewart, Rev. J. W.
Hunter, Rev. W. J., D.D.	Sutherland, Rev. Alex., D.D.
Hunter, Rev. S. J.	Washington, Rev. Geo., M.A.
Jeffers, Rev. W., D.D., F.T.L.	Watch, Rev. C. W.
Jeffery, Rev. T. W.	West, Rev. W. J.
Johnson, Rev. J. H., M.A.	Wilkinson, Rev. J. M., B.A.
Johnson, Rev. F.	Wilkinson, Rev. R. C.
Laird, Rev. J. G.	Withrow, Rev. W. H., M.A.
Laird, Rev. W. H.	Workman, Rev. Geo. C., M.A.
Legate, Rev. Thos.	

MONTREAL CONFERENCE.

Allen, Rev. Jas., B.A.	Chown, Rev. S. D.
Allen, Rev. Wm. A.	Clipsham, Rev. J. W.
Austin, Rev. Nathan.	Conley, Rev. Lewis.
Beaudry, Rev. Louis N.	Conley, Rev. I. B.
Brown, Rev. Thos. C.	Crookshanks, Rev. S.

* Deceased.

LIST OF MEMBERS.

81

Delong, Rev. A. N.	Madge, Rev. W. W., B.A.
Dyre, Rev. Wm. R.	Mansell, Rev. T. J.
Eason, Rev. Richard.	McCann, Rev. Alfred.
Eldridge, Rev. G. S.	McGill, Rev. Wm.
Elliott, Rev. J., D.D., F.T.L.	McRitchie, Rev. Geo.
Flanders, Rev. C. R., B.A.	Perley, Rev. Wm. F.
Franklin, Rev. B., B.A.	Phillips, Rev. S. G., M.A.
Fowler, Rev. J. H., M.A.	Pitcher, Rev. J. T.
Galbraith, Rev. Wm., B.C.L.	Poyser, Rev. Geo. C.
Gibson, Rev. John.	Rilance, Rev. Wm.
Gifford, Rev. G. A.	Ryan, Rev. Wm.
Hammond, Rev. R. M.	Saunders, Rev. J. B.
Hanson, Rev. Chas.	Simpson, Rev. Jas.
Hardie, Rev. Alex., M.A.	Smith, Rev. W. T.
Haylock, Rev. J. J.	Sparling, Rev. W. H., B.A.
Hooker, Rev. Leroy.	Sparling, Rev. Jos. W., B.D.
Jamieson, Rev. Wm. S., M.A.	Stafford, Rev. E. A., B.A., F.T.L.
Johnston, Rev. H., B.D.	Stewart, Rev. J. H.
Jolliffe, Rev. Wm. J.	Timberlake, Rev. W.
Knox, Rev. Wm.	Webster, Rev. J.
Lawrence, Rev. John	Williams, Rev. T. S.
Longley, Rev. Benj., B.A.	Wilson, Rev. J., B.A.
Lucas, Rev. D. V., M.A.	Winter, Rev. D.

London Conference.....	73 members.
Toronto “.....	73 “
Montreal “.....	56 “
Total.....	202
Deceased	3
Present membership	199

N.B.—All members who pay their annual fee of \$1 will be presented with a copy of the “Annual Lecture and Sermon.”

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION.

ART IV.—Change “title of Fellowship,” from “Fellow of the Theological Union of Victoria College” to “Fellow in Theological Literature,” (F.T.L.)

ART X.—Shall become Art XI, and the following inserted as Art X :

ARTICLE X, BRANCH UNIONS.—*Sec. 1.* The members of the Union in each Annual Conference may form a Branch Union and hold an Annual Meeting during the Conference Session, for the purpose of promoting the objects of the Union.

Sec. 2. The Officers of each Branch shall be a President, who shall be *ex-officio* a Vice-President of the Union, and a Secretary-Treasurer, who shall be a Corresponding Secretary of the Union, and who shall collect the annual fee of each member and forward the same to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Union.

Sec. 3. At the Annual Meeting of each Branch a member appointed at the previous Annual Meeting shall read a Thesis to be discussed by the members present.

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